James “Jim” Robinson, Acting Assistant Director, Electrical Services and Assistant Director, Life Safety Systems, recently passed away suddenly at the age of 64.

Jim had been with the University of Maryland for thirty-six years. He came to FM (Physical Plant) in 1996, transferring from the Department of Environmental Safety. At the time of his passing he had two roles - Assistant Director/Life Safety Systems and Acting Assistant Director/Electrical Services. He was the force behind the University’s effort to replace and upgrade our life safety systems. Recently Jim had taken on the additional responsibility of developing UMD’s electrical safety program and providing leadership to the Electrical Services unit.

As leader of the UMD Life Safety program for many years, Jim provided leadership and general oversight of campus life safety systems including 237 fire alarm systems, 200 automatic sprinkler systems, 22 fire pumps, 200 fire hydrants and associated water mains, 5,000 fire extinguishers, and 1,400 emergency showers & eyewashes. He was particularly proud of his involvement in the installation of cutting-edge integrated fire alarm systems. In a 2012 interview Jim noted,

*The University has taken a forward approach to fire protection, life-safety systems in buildings here on campus. We’re now in the process of retrofitting and replacing a number of the older systems on campus. We’re constantly upgrading and improving the systems in the other buildings on campus.*

Mr. Robinson graduated from Randolph-Macon Academy in 1967 and then enlisted in the United States Army, where he served 5 years, mostly in South Korea. His duties included serving as a Korean interpreter. He graduated from UMD with a B.S. in 1978, while volunteering for the College Park Volunteer Fire Department and earned a Master’s Degree from UMUC in 1994.

Jim was active with the National Safety Council and in 2007 received their Distinguished Service to Safety Award for over thirty years of leadership in the field of safety. He was also active with the National Fire Protection Agency.

Jim was very proud of and involved with his family and community. His volunteer efforts included an active role in the Boy Scouts of America and various wildlife management programs.

Among the many kind words said by those remembering Jim in recent weeks are these:

*I am so sorry to hear of Jim's passing. I had the pleasure of working with him at UM College Park and through our professional association CSHEMA. Jim was a true gentleman. He will be missed.*
- Maureen Kotlas, former Director, UMD Department of Environmental Safety

Jim and I were co-workers for more than 30 years. My world at the University of Maryland will never be as bright, because one of the brightest lights has been turned off.

- Jim Ross, Assistant Director, Building & Landscape Maintenance

I will miss Jim in so many ways. As a trusted co-worker, a veteran (we sat together during many Veterans Day events), as a dedicated member of the University team, and as a friend. Jim loved life, and gave so much to the community. His life should be a role model for all of us.

- Jack Baker, Interim Executive Director, Operations & Energy Services